Time's readers and millions of tobacco smokers deserve better of you than your dangerously superficial discussion of the relationship of tobacco smoking to cancer (Time, Nov. 30).

In its release of November 27 the Damon Runyon Fund, now spending $1,400,000 annually to discover the truth about cancer, does a better job: "It is recognized that lung cancer is now more common than it was one or two decades ago. Many suggestions as to the cause of this increase have been made; the possible relationship of air pollution, vehicle exhaust fumes, smoking and other factors have been widely mentioned. Some of these surmises are purely speculative, some are drawn from statistics, others derive from the experimental induction of cancer in animals of these materials. However, none of these factors has as yet induced in experimental animals lung cancer of the kind seen in man. None of this evidence is conclusive but does urge the need for carefully controlled research to secure the answer. Three questions arise which require solution: first, is there a causal relationship; second, if so, what factors are responsible; third, how can they be eliminated?"

That none of these questions has as yet been satisfactorily answered so far as tobacco is concerned is attested by the recent statement of Dr. W. C. Hueper of the National Cancer Institute: that "It may be concluded that the existing evidence neither proves nor strongly indicates that tobacco smoking and especially cigarette smoking, represent a major or even predominating causal factor in the production of cancers of the respiratory tract and are the main reason for the phenomenal increase of pulmonary tumors during recent decades. If excessive smoking actually plays a role in the production of lung cancer, it seems to be a minor one if judged from the evidence on hand."

There is no present justification for the public alarm which you obviously seek to engender. Until the facts are fully known, you would do well to observe your own "moral obligation" to report objectively the whole truth.

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